

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. Claims 1-5 and 7-14 are rejected; and claims 6, 15 and 16 are objected to. Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11-13 and 15 are amended hereby.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1-5 and 7-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,096,433 (Boundy), Applicants have amended claims 1-3, 7-9 and 11-13 and submit that claims 1-5 and 7-14 are now in condition for allowance.

Boundy '433 discloses a terminal block 162 (Fig. 11) which has connectors 172, 174, 96, 98, 100 and 102 where connectors 172, 174 extend further from terminal block 162 than connectors 96, 98, 100 and 102.

In contrast, claim 1 recites in part:

said electrical connector having a first terminal port, a second terminal port, a third terminal port and a fourth terminal port, and a transverse axis, said first terminal port opposed said second terminal port relative to said transverse axis, said first terminal port in line with said second terminal port relative to a plane orthogonal with said transverse axis, said third terminal port opposed to said fourth terminal port relative to said transverse axis, said third terminal port in line with said fourth terminal port relative to a plane orthogonal with said transverse axis, both said first terminal port and said third terminal port on a same side of said electrical connector relative to said transverse axis, both said second terminal port and said fourth terminal port on an opposite side of said electrical connector relative to said transverse axis, both said first terminal port and said fourth terminal port being closer to said transverse axis than both said second terminal port and said third terminal port and thereby defining a staggered offset arrangement.

(Emphasis added.) Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Boundy '433 or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and has distinct advantages thereover.

In further contrast, claim 7 recites in part:

said electrical connector having a first terminal port, a second terminal port, a third terminal port and a fourth terminal port, and a transverse axis, said first terminal port opposed said second terminal port relative to said transverse axis, said first terminal port in line with said second terminal port relative to a plane orthogonal

with said transverse axis, said third terminal port opposed to said fourth terminal port relative to said transverse axis, said third terminal port in line with said fourth terminal port relative to a plane orthogonal with said transverse axis, both said first terminal port and said third terminal port on a same side of said electrical connector relative to said transverse axis, both said second terminal port and said fourth terminal port on an opposite side of said electrical connector relative to said transverse axis, both said first terminal port and said fourth terminal port being closer to said transverse axis than both said second terminal port and said third terminal port and thereby defining a staggered offset arrangement.

(Emphasis added.) Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Boundy '433 or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and has distinct advantages thereover.

In yet further contrast, claim 11 recites in part:

said electrical connector having a first terminal port, a second terminal port, a third terminal port and a fourth terminal port, and a transverse axis, said first terminal port opposed said second terminal port relative to said transverse axis, said first terminal port in line with said second terminal port relative to a plane orthogonal with said transverse axis, said third terminal port opposed to said fourth terminal port relative to said transverse axis, said third terminal port in line with said fourth terminal port relative to a plane orthogonal with said transverse axis, both said first terminal port and said third terminal port on a same side of said electrical connector relative to said transverse axis, both said second terminal port and said fourth terminal port on an opposite side of said electrical connector relative to said transverse axis, both said first terminal port and said fourth terminal port being closer to said transverse axis than both said second terminal port and said third terminal port and thereby defining a staggered offset arrangement.

(Emphasis added.) Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Boundy '433 or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and has distinct advantages thereover.

Boundy '433 discloses a terminal block which has connectors 172, 174 that extend further from terminal block 162 than connectors 96, 98, 100 and 102. Connectors 96, 98, 100 and 102 all extend the same distance from a transverse axis of symmetry. Connectors 164 and 166 extend further from the transverse axis of symmetry, but do not partly or wholly define a staggered offset

connector arrangement. Thus, Boundy '433 fails to disclose or suggest opposing staggered offset connectors consistent with the amendment to claims 1, 7 and 11 described above.

An advantage of the present invention is that it provides a plurality of connector pairs, the two connectors associated with a given connector pair offset thereby avoiding physical interference issues.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1, 7 and 11, and claims 2, 3; 8, 9; 12 and 13 depending respectively therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

At page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner has indicated claims 6, 15 and 16 are allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, for which courtesy the Examiner is thanked. Applicants have amended claim 6 to include the limitations of claims 5 and 1. Applicants have amended claim 15 to include the limitations of claim 11. Claim 16 depends from claim 15. For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that claims 6, 15 and 16 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095,
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Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: October 16, 2004.

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Signature

October 16, 2004

Date

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